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UNCLAS ROME 001488

SIPDIS

FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

STATE FOR NEA WBURNS, PRM/AFR AND IO/EDA  
INFO USAID FOR A/AID, DCHA/FFP LANDIS, DCHA/OFDA POWERS AND  
MENGHETTI  
USDA FOR FAS CHAMBLISS AND HUGHES  
GENEVA FOR RMA AND NKYLOH/USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: FAO Donor Conference on the Desert Locust Emergency

REF: Rome 722

1. Summary. Following up on its February notice (reftel), FAO held a donor conference, on April 8, 2004, regarding the serious on-going outbreak of desert locusts concentrated in Northwest Africa. According to conference presentations, about United States Dollars (USD) 17 million has been spent so far to combat the outbreak, and another USD 17 million may be required before the outbreak is completely controlled. The most serious locust threats are to Moroccan export crops estimated at USD 400 million and the Sahel summer harvest estimated at USD 2.5 billion. Contributions from donors outside the region to mitigate the outbreak have been made by Spain (USD 2 million), USAID (USD 860,000), FAO (USD 774,000), European Union (400,000), Italy (USD 335,000) Norway (USD 150,000), and Germany (USD 20,000). End summary.

2. FAO represented that the current situation is the most serious desert locust outbreak in 40 years. Mauritania and Morocco remain the most seriously affected countries, but desert locust swarms have also been detected in Mali, Algeria, Niger, Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. Note: Although donors spent USD 300 million to control the 1987-89 plague, estimates to control the current outbreak are much lower because of the early warning provided by FAO's Emergency Preventive System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES), which was established in 1994. End note.

3. FAO's briefing indicated that USD 17 million had already been spent to control the outbreak. Approximately 1.15 million hectares have been treated, including nearly 600,000 hectares in Morocco and over 300,000 hectares in Mauritania.

4. USD 10.4 million has been spent in Morocco, including its own contribution of USD 8 million, Spain's USD 2 million, FAO's USD 378,000, and Italy's USD 150,000.

5. USD 5.7 million has been spent in Mauritania, including its own contribution of USD 3 million and contributions from outside the region as follows:

- Italy has contributed USD 185,000 through FAO
- Norway has contributed USD 150,000 through FAO
- The European Union has contributed USD 400,000 bilaterally
- Germany has contributed USD 20,000 bilaterally
- FAO itself has contributed USD 396,000.

6. The following contributions have been made for other countries:

- Mali, USD 460,000, including USD 137,000 from FAO and outside donors;
- Niger, USD 245,000, including USD 45,000 from FAO and outside donors;
- Sudan, USD 80,000 contribution from Saudi Arabia.

7. Through existing grants USAID has made available to FAO USD 860,000, including USD 460,000 already disbursed to affected countries and another USD 400,000 authorized for Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger.

8. Egypt and Saudi Arabia are using their own resources to control outbreaks in those countries.

9. FAO represented that an additional USD 17 million is required as follows:

- Morocco another USD 9.6 million
- Mauritania may require an additional USD 4.5 million
- Mali another USD 1.1 million
- Niger another USD 1.2 million
- Chad another USD 460,000

Note: Although FAO represented that as much as an additional USD 17 million may be required to control the current outbreak, an FAO official familiar with the estimates opined that the Moroccan figure may be overstated by as much as USD 6 or 7 million. In addition, information regarding donor contributions was provided sub rosa after the conference. End note.

10. US Mission Rome Program Specialist Philip Lamade thanked FAO's Director General for the presentation, announced the amount

of the USG contribution to date, assured the Director General that the US Mission would update USG agencies in Washington about the outbreak, and encouraged other donors to consider making additional contributions given the seriousness of the outbreak.  
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